



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | January 28, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Susan Arkeketa, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Joe Deere, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Patsy Powell, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: David Bible, Stacy Laskey, Warren Queton, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Dorcas Williams

I. Call to Order and Introductions

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

II. Roll Call

III. Land Acknowledgment

IV. Approve Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve November meeting minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Powell made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
 1. Aye: 12
 - ii. Motion carried, November meeting minutes approved.

V. Commissioner Oath of Office

- a. Lexi passed around a document for commissioners to sign the oath of office. All commissioners present signed.

VI. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour reflected on recent national changes, beginning of a new year, and new city administration.
 - i. Last Friday, the Title V Commissions Chairs and Vice Chairs met with Mayor Nichols.
 - ii. Vacant position representing GTAIAAC on the HRC, Kim is so busy she has rolled off. If you are interested in serving, reach out to Chairwoman Cohenour.
- b. Chairwoman Cohenour passed around a paper with 2024 committee assignments. Commissioners were prompted to indicate if they would like to change or continue their committee assignments.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- c. Vice Chair Carter: In the last meeting (November 2024), the consent agenda included letter to the City of Tulsa in support of transferring the Council Oak & Stickball Park land to the Muscogee Creek Nation. This is a huge milestone for City of Tulsa tribal relations and Muscogee Creek Nation, first time a park has been transferred to a nation. Very symbolic of what the relationship between tribes and City can be. The Commission played a role and should be proud.
 - i. Chairwoman Cohenour highlighted Daniel's role in setting up meetings between Muscogee Creek Nation and City of Tulsa. Acknowledgement of active role in conversations and penning the letter.
- d. Vice Chair Carter acknowledged Krystal as the incoming Deputy Mayor. Krystal, in turn, noted that the new Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships, Amanda Swope, starts tomorrow (1/29).
- e. Vice Chair Carter also spoke to the recent federal executive orders and potential affects on tribes. The scope of the freeze on federal grants is unclear, but tribes receive many grants so it's important to understand what the freeze means. Stay informed as citizens and awareness of impacts to tribes.
 - i. Commissioner Teehee: Tribal Delegates are working on a national level to minimize impact to their communities.
 - ii. Commissioner Deere: NCAI met drafted letter to White House related to DEI. They seek to educate government officials on their obligation to tribes.
- f. Amanda Swope joined the meeting as a guest and introduced herself to the Commission. Previously worked for Muscogee Creek Nation in self-governance, sovereignty, juvenile justice. Has also served as an Oklahoma State Representative. In her new role, she will support with conversations between tribes and City, work with tribes on key issues (ie: housing and public safety), and act as an ambassador on behalf of Mayor Nichols in Native spaces.
 - i. Vice Chair Carter: It is wonderful that Mayor Nichols recognizes the need for this position.

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Native American Day Committee
 - i. Next Native American Day on Monday, October 13 will be 9th annual.
 - ii. First committee meeting will be February 20th.
 - iii. All commissioners serve on this committee and help from everyone is appreciated as the event is a lot of work.
- b. Dream Keepers Committee
 - i. Commissioner Matt Roberts sent update via email.
 - ii. Taking nominations for Dream Keepers Awards on a continuous basis.
- c. Education Committee
 - i. Commissioner Matt Roberts sent update via email.
 - ii. Attended cross-commission education meeting and discussed the question: What education outcomes is your commission trying to impact? Shared about



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

GTAIAC's work to increase student access to culturally-relevant programming, Students of Excellence awards, and student involvement in Native American Day.

iii. Lexi extended an invite to everyone on the education committee to attend the next cross-commission education meeting. Email Lexi if you would like to attend.

d. Public Relations Committee

i. Commissioner Laskey sent report prior to the meeting.

ii. Working on more PR on social media.

e. Cultural Committee – no report

f. Parks Committee

i. Chairwoman Cohenour met with Tulsa Parks Department in December to determine next steps in the Dream Keepers Park renovation process. Currently out for bid for street study.

ii. Next meeting: Thursday (1/30) at 3pm at Parks Department (1028 E 6th St) to inform local businesses on the process.

iii. Would love to have something happen at the park before the next Native American Day.

iv. Secured funding for Cherokee Garden. Chairwoman Cohenour is going next week to the Osage Nation to request funding for their garden. Will go to Muscogee Creek Nation next.

v. After architecture firm is selected, can start working on the monument. Will collaborate with the Arts Commission.

g. Bylaws Committee

i. Vice Chair Carter shared that the committee discussed the purpose behind reviewing amendments to City Ordinance and Commission Bylaws to ensure everyone is on the same page. It was a great discussion, nothing to present at this meeting.

ii. If you want to be involved, sign up for the Bylaws Committee. Reach out to Vice Chair Carter or anyone on the Bylaws Committee to share feedback

VIII. Old Business – no old business

IX. New Business

a. Commissioner Teehee spoke about the Human Rights Commission vacancy for a GTAIAAC liaison.

i. Meetings are on Mondays, the day before GTAIAAC.

ii. Suggested adding space for HRC report in committee reports.

iii. A lot of good people who serve on that commission, find commonality amongst other commissions and broad network of individuals.

b. Chairwoman Cohenour prompted Commissioner Teehee to talk about the United Keetoowah Band decision and implications for tribal sovereignty for Cherokee Nation.

i. Commissioner Teehee: On the last day of previous presidential administration, they issued a legal opinion that gave UKB the ability to have land on the Cherokee Nation taken into a trust, will have jurisdiction over 76 acres of land taken from



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Cherokee Nation. Decision made without regard to any federal court case or congressional act. Cherokee Nation believes the opinion is wrong, could set precedent for challenges to tribal sovereignty in the future.

- ii. Nothing has been implemented, so currently nothing has changed.
- iii. Cherokee Nation is seeking a withdraw.
- iv. Commissioner Deere: Hope the review will find there is no jurisdiction to follow through on this decision.
- v. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter: Has this happened before?
 - 1. Commissioner Teehee: Yes, though not often, and have seen disastrous results when it has happened in the past.

X. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Tulsa City Council Native American Affairs Committee on February 3.
- b. Tulsa Public Schools student social dance on April 12. Commissioner Shari Williams will send a save the date when available.
- c. Lexi shared information about two upcoming City of Tulsa events:
 - i. 2SLGBTQIA+ Know Your Rights Forum (January 30) hosted by the Human Rights Commission's 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee. At Centennial Center in Veteran's Park from 6 – 7:30 pm.
 - ii. Lunar New Year (February 1) hosted by the Asian Affairs Commission. At 101 Archer from 6 – 9 pm. This is AAC's first community-wide event, and they look to Native American Day as a model of what a cultural event can be.
- d. Tulsa City County Library Breakfast (Saturday, March 1): Award ceremony not open to the public. Commissioner Runnels will share invite with the commission when ready.
- e. Tulsa Community College Heritage Day (Friday, January 31): Starting at 9am at TCC's Northeast Campus. Shared by Commissioner Deere.

XI. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn.
 - i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Waeltz-Carter seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 12
 - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.